

only an extremely limited number of copies of this pamphlet have been printed. The one before us is made up of printer's proofs sent by the author to Mr. Dresser. This is to be regretted, as the chief portion of the paper consists of notes of birds observed and collected by Mr. W. H. Elliott, many of which are interesting, especially those on the singular Alcidae of the North Pacific. In this paper, too, *Tringa ptilocnemis* is described for the first time by Dr. Coues. This species has already to carry a synonym, it having been described by Mr. Harting, from Mr. Elliott's specimens sent to him by the Smithsonian Institution, as *Tringa gracilis* (P. Z. S. 1874, p. 242, Aug. 1st).

XLV.—Letters, Announcements, &c.

The following letters, addressed "To the Editor of 'The Ibis,'" have been received:—

DEAR SIR,—Allow me to make a few observations upon some of the birds referred to in 'The Ibis' for April 1874.

PHYLLOPNEUSTE BOREALIS, Blasius, p. 140.

Lord Walden of course knows that *P. magnirostris*, Blyth, is exceedingly like *P. borealis*—so much so, that Mr. Hume ('Stray Feathers,' i. p. 495) confounded the two. I am anxious to know if Lord Walden is certain in this identification of No. 79 as *P. borealis*.

I examined a few of Mr. Swinhoe's Chinese examples of *P. borealis* (*P. sylvicultrix*, Swinhoe) in the Indian Museum; and although of the same size and colour, between the two birds I found the following differences:—

1. The first primary of *P. borealis* is very minute, and almost *Acrocephalus*-like, as in *P. sibilatrix*; while in *P. magnirostris* it is of tolerable size and *Hypolais*-like, as in *H. polyglotta* and *H. rama*.

2. The 2nd quill of *P. borealis* is equal in length to midway between 5th and 6th, as in *P. trochilus*; while in *P. magnirostris* the 2nd quill is about equal to the 9th, the latter bird's wing being more rounded.

P. magnirostris, Blyth, is the bird, I believe, hitherto procured from the Andamans. Will Lord Walden kindly inform us, with the points of difference I have noted before him, whether he still considers the birds procured by Lieut. Ramsay to be *P. borealis*?

✓
1876
500
ANTHUS CERVINUS (Pallas), p. 141.

I am surprised that the axillaries should be white. Our Indian *Anthus rosaceus*, Hodgson, which I take to be *Anthus cervinus*, Pallas, as a rule, has the axillaries strongly tinged with sulphur-yellow. I must say I should much like to see one of these Andamanese Pipits. I have failed to obtain the loan of one from Mr. Hume, who informs me he has a distinct Andamanese Pipit; but until I see it myself I shall not be convinced.

✓
CORYDALLA STRIOLATA (Blyth), p. 140.

Lord Walden says he is "disposed to doubt the propriety of separating this form from *C. rufula*." I have large series of each, and know them well in life. A small *C. striolata* much resembles a good-sized *C. rufula*; but I can, I think, always distinguish them.

1. *C. rufula* has, as a rule, a proportionally longer hind claw and a larger bill.

2. *The two voices are utterly different.*

3. *C. striolata* is a *migrant*, appearing very numerous in the plains of India in September; but *C. rufula* is *non-migratory*, and breeds over India generally.

Lord Walden may rest assured that there are no two species more distinct than these two Pipits. Perhaps the Andaman birds are *C. rufula*, and have been misnamed "*C. striolata*;" I should much like to see one. Even if there were absolutely no visible difference, the utterly different notes and habits must not be lost sight of. *C. richardi*, *C. striolata*, *C. rufula*, and *Anthus campestris* can all be recognized with one's eyes shut, merely by *hearing* them, and this with the greatest certainty.

We must not suppress a good species, if it can be avoided.

MILVUS MELANOTIS (J. & S.), p. 150.

I have also a very fine large rufous bird. The excess of rufescence is, as Mr. Swinhoe observes, accidental.

I regard *M. govinda* (Sykes), on account of the great size noted in the original description (P. Z. S. 1832, part ii. pp. 80–81), as identical with *M. melanotis* (J. & S.). No common Indian Kite is 26 inches long.

That *M. major*, Hume, = *M. melanotis* (J. & S.), I have on Mr. Gurney's authority, who informs me that Mr. Sharpe compared examples of *M. major* with the types of *M. melanotis* in the Leyden Museum, and found them absolutely identical. That *M. melanotis* (T. & S.) = *M. govinda* (Sykes) I think, judging from the original description, there is but little doubt. I propose dropping the use of the synonyms *melanotis* and *major*, and reverting to Sykes's original term.

Our common Indian Kite, so long erroneously called "*M. govinda*" is *M. affinis* (Gould), and identical with the Australian bird. Mr. Gurney returned me one of our common village Kites as typical *M. affinis*.

CERTHIA FAMILIARIS (L.), p. 152.

1875
145 Is certainly not that species, but probably my *C. hodgsoni*, which I obtained in Cashmere (J. A. S. 1872, p. 74).

PHYLLOPNEUSTE SCHWARZI (Radde), p. 183.

This bird was identified with *P. viridanus* (Blyth) by Canon Tristram (Ibis, 1871, p. 109). If the identification was correct, why does Mr. Swinhoe not adopt the prior term for the bird?

Yours &c.,

W. E. BROOKS.

Mogul Serai,
24th July, 1874.

Vienna, 29th August, 1874.

SIR,—In my paper "On the Birds in the Imperial Collection at Vienna obtained from the Leverian Museum" (Ibis, 1873, p. 113), *Pithys rufigula* (Bodd.) is mentioned, with the remark that the specimen is no longer in the collection.

This determination was founded on the inventory, in which the bird is named *Turdus pectoralis*, which synonym really belongs to *Pithys rufigula*.

Since I wrote this I have found in the collection the specimen in question, labelled "*Turdus modestus*, Natterer," which designation was also added in the inventory. In the old catalogue and on the label of the specimen was also written : —" Von H. Fichtel, 1806, N. 200, Auction N. 1413, fœmina, Christian's Isle under the Line."

On examination, the bird proved to be *Phæornis obscura* (Gmel.). It agrees, though marked as female, very well with Cassin's description of the male (Unit. Stat. Expl. Exp. p. 155, t. 9. f. 3); and I scarcely doubt that it is the type of Latham's Dusky Flycatcher (Gen. Syn. iii. p. 344), which was contained in the Leverian Museum, and therefore also of *Muscicapa obscura*, Gmel. The only difficulty which could arise would be the habitat. Christian's Isle I cannot find; and its situation under the Line would be in discordance with that of the Sandwich Islands.

Phæornis is decidedly a Pachycephaline bird, whereas I am of opinion that *Chasiempis sandwichensis* belongs to the Muscicapidæ. The latter shows highly developed rictal bristles, some of which reach as far as, or even surpass the middle of the bill.

Our Museum is in possession of a pair of *Chasiempis sandwichensis* from Enero, Ohan, 1837, bought by Natterer, 1840, at Berlin, from H. Deppe.

Latham's description is in tolerable accordance with our female; but in the latter the bill is not yellowish at the base, the wing-coverts are edged with white, not with pale rust-colour, the quills not white-tipped (probably a misprint in Latham's book); on the sides of the neck there is no admixture of white; and on the chin dusky streaks are wanting or almost imperceptible; of the white uropygium no mention is made.

I am, very truly yours,

PELZELN.

Northrepps, 3 September, 1874.

SIR,—I regret to find that I appended a wrong name to an Egret sent by Mr. Ayres from Trans Vaal, in 'The Ibis' for the present year, p. 104, and No. 204 in Mr. Ayres's list.

The species there referred to under the head of *Herodias garzetta* should have been inserted as *H. intermedia*, Wagl.

I am yours, &c.,

J. H. GURNEY.

33 Carlyle Square, London, S.W.
18th September, 1874.

SIR,—In my paper "On Birds from Hakodadi," published in 'The Ibis' for April 1874, under "35. Eastern Bullfinch, *Pyrrhula orientalis*," I note that I received from Mr. Blakiston "a male and female without date." On reexamining these specimens lately, I observed that the male was typical both in size and colour, whereas the female was large and has a wash of white along the web on each side of the stem of each outer tail-feather. From this last character I argued that I had from Hakodadi a female *P. cassini*, Baird.

From the Kurile Islands I have a pair of *P. orientalis*, sent me by Von Schrenck. The male is typically coloured; the female has an indistinct white patch on the underside of the outer rectrix. Of another pair from Hakodadi, collected by Mr. H. Whitely, both have more or less white on the part indicated, and the male has a rosy blush over the grey underparts. At this juncture, Mr. Taczanowski, of Warsaw, sent me a male of the larger size, marked *P. coccinea*, from Ussuri. This has a distinct white tail-patch. To compare with this, Mr. Dresser kindly lent me a male *P. coccinea* from Moscow. The latter had the red mixed with yellow, as in our common Bullfinch, and no signs of the white on the tail. I asked to borrow a female. He sent one received from Greece; and on the tail of this occurred a white patch, though small. This certainly shakes my confidence in *P. cassini*; and until we get adult males from Hakodadi, it will be impossible to say for certain whether my present specimen is *P. cassini* or a phase of *P. coccinea*, which we have evidence to show extends

cast as far at least as Russian Mantchuria. M. Taczanowski sent also a pair of the fine grey Bullfinch—the male from the Ussuri, the female from the River Onon. The former has a clear tail, the female has the white patch strongly pronounced. The white tail-patch, therefore, can scarcely be accepted as a fixed character; and I should be rather inclined to suggest that *P. cassini* be a hybrid (strongly as I object to the idea in face of the Development theory) between two species, say *P. coccinea* and *P. cineracea*. Temminck, I see, says (Manuel, iii. p. 249, under "*Pyrrhula vulgaris*") :—"On la trouve en Sibérie, et jusqu'au Japon;" but in those days they had not, I believe, recognized the larger form to which De Selys-Longchamps subsequently gave the name *P. coccinea*.

Yours, &c.,

ROBERT SWINHOE.

XLVI.—Obituary.

WE regret to have to record the premature death, during the past year, of one of the original founders of our association. The Rev. WILLIAM HENRY HAWKER, of Ashford Lodge, near Petersfield, vicar of the parish of Steep, in which his property was situated, although not an actual contributor to these pages, was a personal friend of many of us, and an ardent supporter of natural science.

Mr. Hawker was the fifth son of the late Admiral Hawker, and was born in Dec. 1827. He was educated at Rugby and Trinity College, Cambridge, and, after taking his degree, studied for the church at Wells. After taking Orders, he was for some years curate of Idsworth, near Horndean, in the south of Hampshire, and removed to Ashford on succeeding to that property in 1860. Mr. Hawker was owner of a considerable collection of British birds and insects; he was an ardent entomologist, and an excellent botanical collector. He made frequent excursions in various parts of Europe, particularly in Norway, Switzerland, the Maritime Alps of Savoy, and the islands of Corsica and Sardinia. He was an